



**MINUTES OF THE SPRINGDALE PLANNING COMMISSION WORK MEETING ON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 02, 2026, AT 5:00 PM
AT THE CANYON COMMUNITY CENTER,
126 LION BOULEVARD, SPRINGDALE, UT 84767**

The meeting convened at 5:00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jennifer McCulloch, Commissioners Terry Kruschke, Paul Zimmerman, Kashif Bhatti, Mellisa LaBorde, Katie Munson and Jorge Hernández from Zion National Park.

EXCUSED: Commissioner Rich Swanson

ALSO PRESENT: Town Manager Thomas Dansie, Director of Community Development Niall Connolly, Associate Planner Eugenia Akiyom, and Deputy Town Clerk April Raddatz recording. See the attached sheet for attendees.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion made by Mellisa LaBorde to approve the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Paul Zimmerman.

Vote on Motion:

Kruschke: Aye

McCulloch: Aye

Zimmerman: Aye

Bhatti: (had not been asked to vote yet, so no vote)

LaBorde: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McCulloch designated Kashif Bhatti as voting member in the absence of the excused Commissioner.

General Announcements:

Mr. Connolly stated that the Commission had previously discussed reviewing the Town's parking standards and requested parking surveys to gather data. Staff planned to conduct parking counts over Labor Day weekend and the following week to compare busy periods with typical weekdays and Saturdays. Counts planned for that day were postponed due to flooding and unavailable parking spaces.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest: There were no declared conflicts of interest.

A. Discussion / Non-Action Items

Discussion about potential amendments to clarify Chapter 10-15F of the Town Code (Geologic Hazard), specifically clarifying the requirement for geotechnical investigation reports in the Geologic Hazard Study Area. Staff contact: Niall Connolly

Staff Presentation:

Mr. Connolly introduced a discussion of Chapter 10-15F of the Town Code, which addresses geologic hazards. He explained that the Commission had expressed interest in clarifying the ordinance and its application during the development process, particularly regarding geotechnical report requirements for developments within geologic hazard study areas with elevated landslide, rockfall, or liquefaction risks. He noted that some projects could benefit from geotechnical reports even when the code did not automatically require them, while reports could be unnecessarily burdensome for minor developments. The discussion was intended to ensure the requirements were appropriate and effective.

Commission Questions:

Mr. Zimmerman requested that Mr. Connolly bring a map to the screen that showed the different areas for landslides, rockfalls, and liquefaction in general. Mr. Kruschke inquired if the maps and area definitions came from the Utah Geological Survey. Mr. Dansie explained that the Utah Geological Survey's hazard maps were developed using regional data, including aerial photography, topography, and geologic mapping, rather than site-specific property analyses. The maps identified areas with an increased likelihood of geologic hazards but did not confirm the presence, extent, or severity of hazards on individual properties. He clarified that geotechnical investigations primarily evaluated subsurface soil conditions and foundation requirements and were not designed to provide an in-depth, site-specific geologic hazard analysis. Under the Town's ordinance, when a geotechnical report was required for development within a geologic hazard study area, the geotechnical engineer was required to conduct an initial assessment of site-specific hazards and determine whether additional study was warranted. He emphasized that the maps served as general guides rather than definitive assessments of individual properties.

Ms. McCulloch asked whether it made sense to require any property in that area to trigger a geological investigation. Mr. Connolly responded that the first step is a geotechnical report, and following that, a possible step two is a geological hazard investigation, if warranted.

Mr. Kruschke asked whether geotechnical reports followed a standardized format across municipalities and engineering organizations or varied depending on the Town's requirements. Mr. Connolly responded and stated that they are standardized.

Commission Discussion:

Ms. McCulloch directed Commissioners to begin reviewing the questions posed to Commissioners in the Staff Report. Mr. Zimmerman referenced notes that he had made and sent to the Commissioners and Staff; please see those notes attached to these minutes as **EXHIBIT A**.

Mr. Kruschke suggested reviewing which geologic hazards, such as radon and rockfall, should be included in the ordinance. He also recommended tying geotechnical report requirements to the existing grading permit thresholds for minimum square footage and cubic yards of grading, rather than requiring a report for any amount of grading. Mr. Zimmerman added that it was also important to consider the surroundings of what is being graded. Mr. Kruschke stated that if someone excavates less than the requirement for a grading permit and isn't producing a structure or building, there wouldn't currently be a requirement to get permission from the Town.

Mr. Zimmerman asked where the numbers in the Town Code came from and whether the Town could request insight from a geotechnical consultant. Mr. Dansie said the Town could request that, and that ultimately the Commissioners would make any policy decisions.

Mr. Kruschke stated that it would be helpful to add the “geotechnical report” and “geologic hazard report” to the definition section of the Town Code. Ms. McCulloch and Mr. Zimmerman agreed. Mr. Connolly said that would be easy to do and helpful for people moving forward. Mr. Zimmerman said he thought they were described throughout the code, but it would be better to include them in the definitions. Ms. McCulloch also asked for clarification on the definition of “Human Occupancy” in the definition section of Town Code.

Ms McCulloch also requested a conversation to provide more clarity on what stage of the development process the geotechnical report is required. Mr. Kruschke discussed the possibility of completing it before a grading permit, and then acknowledged that grading permits are not always required. He added that it could be a requirement before any permit is granted, whether it’s a building permit or a grading permit.

Mr. Connolly reviewed the Commissioners' discussion and stated that Staff would begin working on the requests made at the meeting.

B. Adjourn

Motion made by Paul Zimmerman to Adjourn at 5:48 PM. The motion was seconded by Terry Kruschke.

Vote on Motion:

Kruschke: Aye

McCulloch: Aye

Zimmerman: Aye

Bhatti: Aye

LaBorde: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

April Raddatz, Deputy Town Clerk

APPROVAL: _____ **DATE:** _____

A recording of the public meeting is available on the Town’s YouTube Channel at youtube.com/@SpringdaleTownPublicMeetings. For more information, please call 435-772-3434 or email springdale@springdale.utah.gov.

Thoughts for Planning Commission Meeting 02Sep26

Staff Notes indicated “The Commission may wish to consider the following questions: “

1. Does the list of situations where a geotechnical report is required (i.e. 10-15F-5(A)) cover all of the situations it should? **NO**
2. Does the language need any clarification? **YES**
3. Should the Code provide more clarity on what stage of the development process the geotechnical report is required? **???**
4. 10-15F-9 indicates that a geologic hazard investigation may be required for any land use entitlement. Is this too broad, or is it beneficial to keep it broad to allow flexibility? For example, should some permits, such as sign permits or fence permits be automatically exempt? **10-15F-9(E) states “Springdale will review any proposed land use that requires preparation of a geologic report under this chapter to determine compliance with the standards in this chapter, as well as the other standards referenced in this chapter” indicating that only proposed land uses that require a geologic report are impacted, NOT ALL “Land use entitlements”.**
5. Is it possible to craft the language in such a way that investigations are provided for proposals that create a genuine risk, while not overburdening lower risk types of development? **Yes, see recommended changes in RED. Illuminations in Teal.**

Thoughts and suggested changes

10-15F-5(A).

A geotechnical report is required for the approval of any of the following:

1. Subdivision approval process;
2. Design/development review process for any new building over 500 square feet in area; and
3. Any addition to an existing building when the combined area of the existing building and new addition exceed 1,000 square feet in area;
4. Any structure intended for human occupancy; and
5. Any development involving soil disturbance or unnatural soil loading, whether it be grading, excavation, tunnelling, drilling, compaction or other similar activities, in a known Geological Hazard Study Area as described in 10-15F-4.

6. Any development described in 10-15F-5(C)(9)

57. In any other instance where the DCD determines the site or soil conditions warrant a geotechnical report.

10-15F-5(B).

The purposes of the geotechnical report are to 1) identify any problematic soils (including subsurface soils) that may be encountered during development and which may pose a threat to the structural integrity of the proposed development, **the neighboring properties or the surrounding community** ; 2) provide specific engineering recommendations (**including the need/requirement for a Geotechnical Investigation**) to mitigate the threats posed by any problematic soils identified; and 3) conduct an initial analysis of geologic hazards for properties located in a Geologic Hazard Study Area.

I believe 10-15F-5(C) and 10-15F-5(D) were not addressed in previous meetings as they presuppose a geotechnical report. However, the depth of the excavation into the 30% grade being greater than zero satisfies 10-15F-5(C)(9)(b), i.e., any excavation into the slope is greater than a negative distance from the edge, and should require a geotechnical report as suggested with newly proposed addition of 10-15F-5(A)(6)

10-15F-5(C)-

9. The geotechnical report must contain a slope stability analysis as described in section 10-15F-5(C)(10) if the horizontal distance from the edge of an excavation to any of the following features is less than twice the depth of the excavation:

- a. A property line,
- b. A natural slope with a grade of 30% or greater that is not defined as microtopography,
- c. A floodway (as defined in section 10-13A-9 of this title), or
- d. The top of bank of a natural wash which is mapped as a Special Flood Hazard Area by the Federal Emergency Management Agency on the Flood Insurance Rate Map or on the Draft Hydraulic Work Maps for Springdale (this does not include the Special Flood Hazard Area associated with the Virgin River).
- e. For the purposes of this regulation, the depth of the excavation includes all over-excavation proposed or necessary for the development.

10. If any of the conditions in subsection 10-15F-5(C)(9) apply, then the geotechnical report must include an analysis of slope stability. If the slope stability analysis determines that there are potential slope stability impacts to neighboring property or to any of the sensitive features listed above, or a risk of slope failure or collapse during construction or post construction, the analysis must include recommendations to mitigate these impacts. Any such recommendations must be implemented in the development.

10-15F-5-(D)

Geologic Hazard Investigation Report required: For properties in a Geologic Hazard Study Area, if the initial analysis of geologic hazards in a geotechnical report required under paragraph A identifies significant site-specific risk of geologic hazard on a property, then a geologic hazard investigation and report that meets the standards of this chapter is required.

10-15F-4: - GEOLOGIC HAZARD STUDY AREA: (out of order, provided for reference)

The Geologic Hazard Study Area means and includes the following areas:

- A. Designated Special Study Areas by the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Utah Geological Survey (UGS, <https://geology.utah.gov>), including those areas designated per U.C.A. § 79-3-202(f) around hazardous faults and are in the *Utah Quaternary Fault and Fold Database* (<https://geology.utah.gov/apps/qfaults/>); and
- B. Landslide hazard areas defined in section 10-15F-8A.; and
- C. Liquefaction hazard areas defined in section 10-15F-8B.; and
- D. Rockfall hazard areas defined in section 10-15F-8C.; and
- E. Radon gas hazard areas defined as any building or structure in Springdale that contains a basement; and
- F. Any other similar areas.